

2. **Amendments to the Claims**

Consistent with the election made above, please withdraw claims 1-51 and 59-64 from the present application, with traverse.

1 – 51. (Withdrawn)

52. (Original) A fibre optic protector for subsurface burial, said protector comprising an elongate member having sidewalls defining a space there between, with a closed upper end and an open lower end, the space between said sidewalls being suitable for receiving and retaining two or more fibre optic cables in stacked array.

53. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 52, wherein said upper end comprises a tapered ridge.

54. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 52, wherein said lower end comprises a tapered ridge.

55. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 52, wherein said lower end includes mating locking portions for closing said sidewalls together.

56. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 52, further comprising a break-resistant protective strip.

57. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 56, wherein said protective strip is retained within said hollow interior and is removable therefrom.

58. (Original) A protector as defined in claim 56, wherein said protective strip is molded in place within an upper region of said protector.

59 – 64. (Withdrawn).